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## Parent Education In The Rural Communities Of Texas

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PARENT EDUCATION IN THE RURAL  
COMMUNITIES OF TEXAS

By

Beulah Morrow-Oliver

A Thesis in Home Economics Submit-  
ted in Partial Fullfillment of  
the Requirements for the

DEGREE

Of

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Of The

PRAIRIE VIEW STATE NORMAL AND INDUS-  
TRIAL COLLEGE  
Prairie View, Texas

August, 1935

DEDICATION

---

To My Darling Daughter ,

Orchid Odair Oliver

Whose love and inspiration

I owe so much

This Thesis is dedicated

---



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to make acknowledgement to the following: To Dr. Ada Hart Arlitt, Department of Child Care, University of Cincinnati, who's council and instruction created an interest in me for this field.

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B.M.O.



## C O N T E N T S

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### Parent Education In The Rural Communities of Texas

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## INTRODUCTION

Parent Education has become one of the most outstanding phases of Adult Education. All races are becoming open-minded to the importance of securing some scientific knowledge of child life and family relation-ship. They are being led to realize that Parent Education is not only an advantage but an essential in the attempt to gain the fullest and most wholesome family life possible in a changing civilization and many are awakening to the fact that the old hit or miss method can no longer be depended upon since it leaves both parent and child groping in the dark.

In the following discussion an attempt is made to stress the importance of Parent Education as it relates to the Colored Community life of Texas, and with special attention to ways of creating the active interest of the parents in order that the program may go forth and specific values be realized.

It is presented with the hope that the information contained here will be of some value



to the teachers and leaders in these communities for they will possibly be the only means. At the beginning by which the program will be started.

## CHAPTER I.

### PARENT EDUCATION IN THE RURAL COMMUNITY LIFE OF TEXAS

What is Parent Education is the question that we are confronted with every day.

The White House Conference which met in Washington, D. C. in 1932 to discuss some phases of Parent Education, in an attempt to give its meaning formulated this simple definition: "Parent Education is any thing that teaches a parent to be a better parent."

The Hand Book for Leaders of Parent Education Groups in Emergency Educational Programs prepared by the National Council, November, 1934, gives the following explanations: "Parent Education is not wholly a new movement, since time immemorial fathers and mothers have prepared themselves in one way or another for meeting the responsibilities of child rearing and family life. It is only in recent years, however, that parents seeking assistance in this preparation have had the Systematic Cooperation of professional workers, to help them understand and use the rich store of knowledge about human growth



and development which modern Society is accumulating."

"These two forces, the desire of the parent to learn and the readiness of professional workers to assist unite to find expression in a number of activities. One of the commonest and most popular is the Discussion Group.". "In these groups Parents study such subjects as the care and guidance of children, the selection and preparation of food, the nature of family relationship and the meaning of Citizenship in a changing social order."

There is an increasing amount of evidence to show that this form of Parent Education has value through participating in such group activities. Many men and women are to-day acquiring knowledge and gaining perspectives which are contributing to their understanding and enjoyment of life. They are learning things about child development and home making which are helping them to create a finer family life and to get along better with all kinds of people. They are finding out how to function more effectively as parents, neighbors, and citizens."

Education as a subject in our curriculum deals with methods of teaching different subjects and



other related phases.

Parent Education deals with the method of giving instruction to parents. The technique of teaching a parent is different from that of teaching a group of college students even with the upper level groups, it becomes necessary to simplify and eliminate some of the technical terms of most subject matter, and to be a trained leader is to assure more success in the initial work with parents, hence methods have become an essential part of this program rather than trial and error, but Parent Education deals with what to teach, and how to teach the parent to meet everyday problems in child guidance and family life.

With these established facts before us, it is not a question of whether this popular course has any value, the guess work has been eliminated by experience, and the records of the good resulting from group studies organized every where about us. How to awaken our group to interest readiness and activity is the problem before us.

Child guidance is being taught in some of our colleges but that reaches only a few. It is the



parent on the job in which we are now interested.

We do not feel that other social and civic organizations can meet this need, it must be met as a separate phase of Adult Education.

The Social Service Worker busy himself with the problem of looking after the unfortunate child and Parent Education attempts to eventually eliminate the number of unfortunate by correct training.

The Health Officer is interested mainly in correcting health conditions. We feel that with the proper dietetic rules taught better health conditions will follow.

The visiting teacher in cities investigates behavior problems, the root of which is often traced to the home. Most of the Adult Evening School Classes have as their goal diminishing illiteracy. Parent Education reaches even the illiterate with helpful advice in child study and family relationship.

Therefore, we believe that one can more nearly reach the root of much of the evil by this particular avenue: The Parent on the job. For it is "The hand that rocks the cradle". The early formative years of a child's life are intrusted to the parent

The most important period, from the stand point of development mentally, physically and spiritually.

In some instances the situation has become a little different, for example, Minnesota has organized all over the State, from Minneapolis and a leader is sent out to any group of ten or more persons. From the Institute of Child Culture at the University of Minnesota. This Institute was organized in 1908 for the purpose of studying the child and the child leaders, for educational work and to carry out the child's needs of research to parents in child care. Any one who is not a citizen of that State has to pay for the literature, books etc.

In Ohio it is a City Program, Columbus, Ohio, and Cincinnati, Ohio, have organized Parent Education Programs.

In Cincinnati, it is compulsory in every case compulsory instances. Parents are not within the following ways: All Sunday School parents have weekly child saving groups at the church. All High School parents have meetings weekly and child-weekly at the neighborhood high schools to discuss educational problems.



## CHAPTER II.

### WAYS IN WHICH OTHER STATES ARE MEETING THE NEEDS OF THEIR GROUPS IN PARENT EDUCATION

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In some instances Parent Education has become a State Problem, for example, Minnesota Groups are organized all over the State, free literature and a leader is sent out to any group of ten or more persons. From the Institute of Child Welfare at the University of Minnesota. This institute was organized in 1925 for the purpose of studying the child and training leaders, for extension work and to carry the scientific results of research to parents in simple form. Any one who is not a citizen of that State has to pay for the literature, books etc.

In Ohio it is a City Problem. Columbia, Ohio, and Cincinnati, Ohio, have outstanding Parent Education Programs.

In Cincinnati, it is compulsory in many non-compulsory instances. Groups are met within the following ways: All Sunday School parents have weekly discussion groups at the church. All High School parents have meetings weekly and semi-weekly at the respective high schools to discuss adolescent problems.



The Elementary Schools meet at their respective schools semi-weekly and select their own subjects for the period of discussion.

Social Clubs from the lower level to the upper professional and wealthy groups select their subjects for discussion and a leader is sent weekly from the University. A leader being sent from the University to any group of ten or more.

The compulsory groups are organized as follows:  
All mothers of Kindergartens and Nursery Schools must meet some group for study of the pre-school child.

All mothers receiving Mother's Pension Money from the state must meet with some club weekly.

All social worker's cases must attend some week study group.

All Day Nursery mothers must belong to their respective groups.

Therefore all mothers with any civic help must meet some study group. A leader and literature is sent out from the University of Cincinnati, Department of Child Care.

There are several leaders paid salaries for



this particular work and they have an itinerary of study groups to lead weekly. Students in training are allowed to work under these specially trained leaders, and records and reports are sent to the head of the Department of Child Care and Parent Education at the University for inspection.

Frequently institutes are held with these leaders to check up on information and training.



### CHAPTER III.

#### DISCRIPTION OF TEXAS RURAL COMMUNITY LIFE WITH REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF PARENT EDUCATION

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Gregg County has a very small area but a vast population. There are approximately, 10,000 rural school and pre-school children living in the rural district. These children find recreation from supervision of teachers during the school sessions which vary from six to nine months terms, and recreation of their own origin. The latter of which depicts very immoral lives for youth in our present day society. Picture for a moment boys and girls between the ages of eight and sixteen years of age and over finding or seeking pleasure on the streets from about 4 P.M. until 12 P.M. To me, it is pitiful indeed. Again these same boys and girls are to go home in the depth of night with all types of companions. Mothers and fathers in great numbers take their young children to town on Saturday morning and keep them there until late in the afternoon. They give them all types of food that is unwholesome for growth and development. By nightfall the



infants are completely fatigued from the discomforts of the day.

Later during the night children a little older are allowed to attend the Saturday night dances where everybody is invited, thus very immoral company for children. These conditions are found in part throughout the county; but not in every family.

In Redland School Center Community the principle occupation is Agriculture. Most of the people own their homes, they are heavy tax payers hence they devote much of their time to the welfare of the school. They have from eight to eight and one-half months of school. They elect their own trustees who in return control a specified amount of money to keep up the incidental expenses of the school. One of their biggest efforts is to see to it that good teachers are employed each year and that they receive salaries in keeping with the state apportionment.

The people in this community believe in the "Live at Home" slogan and as far as that is



concerned ninety percent of them live up to this slovan. They work hard and train their children to work but as for social activities there are none outside of the school and church.

Until these recent years their children would scarcely finish the elementary grades before they would quit school, go to the city or get married. One of the greatest ambitions of the children each week would be a trip to town on Saturday if he worked well all the week. This, I think had a tendency to lure them away from home, to most times join the rougher elements of people.

In this community it happened that the greater part of these people were relatives. This seemed to make the social side of life weaker, for in it we had the marriage and inter-marriage of close relatives or fits of jealousy sometimes resulting in murder or other criminal cases of the lowest type.

One day seven year old Tommie came to me in school and said, "Miss Jackson, I believe mamma



is going to find another baby, 'cause she is acting just like she did before she found my sister, Marie. E-v-e-r-y morning she just pukes all she eats up, and just lay 'round and sleep all the time, and thats the v-e-r-y way she did before Marie was borned." I replied, "Oh thats fine. Want you be glad to have another pretty little sister or brother?" So the child replied, "YES", and ran out to play.

This statement, through some of the High School pupils who were standing near by, reached Tommie's mother. Oh how ridiculous the mother, Mrs. Mary, thought such statements were for a child this small to give, or, even possess. The mother began to question the child as to where he received such terrible information. One question after another, came from the mother to the child. So finally the child told her, that his schoolmate, Dan, 12 years old, told him that people found babies and he watched her before and after Marie was born, and he saw her do the same thing that she was doing now. The mother abused him and told him that



he was just lying and she was going to show him what "kids" should know and what they should not know. As a result, the mother beat the child, isolated him from his playmates, and kept him home all the time. What should the mother have done in this situation? What could the teacher have done to assist in solving the problem?

The rural child does not have an access to the various social activities of life as the city child. I will attempt to describe the conditions of the rural child's home. The majority live in humble homes, without screens, glass windows, steps and in some cases porches. They don't know that cross ventilation and sunshine are quite essential in the home. Some of the windows are plank which makes the house very dark.

These homes are unsanitary and unfit for children to live in. The chairs are usually benches that have no back rest for the child. While eating the bench serves as his chair. Most rural people have large families and in some



cases we find the father sleeping with his 16 year old daughter, and mother sleeping with her adolescence son, brothers and sisters sleeping together. Some families don't even have enough beds to accommodate their children, and we find pallets made on the floor through-out the year. The houses are very small, with humble sleeping capacity makes it unsatisfactory for children.

They do not have any regard to the location of their hog pens, horse lots, wells, chicken houses, or wood yards. They are usually situated in the front. The wells have rops and buckets, the children play around the well, and leaves the ropes and bucket as often on ground as in proper place at the well.

Some mothers carry their children to town Saturday. The children usually stand around town nearly three fourth of the day. Their dinner is a large piece of sausage or a piece of cheese and crackers. And as a desert an all-day sucker. This is an injury to the child both mentally and physically.



Where as, some mothers never carry their children to town, generally some have never seen the train. The rural child has a spacious play ground, but is hardly equipped with any worth while toys, or play things.

Their Sunday service last from 11 o'clock A.M. to 4 o'clock P.M. The seats are very uncomfortable, especially for children to remain during service. The social activities for the upper classmen, are school entertainment some Friday nights, while others give all night Saturday night suppers.

The community in which I work is a very poor community with about forty-five or fifty families, each family with an average of about four or five children. Most of these people are tenant farmers which put them in a very poor condition from a Economic and Social point of view.

For the last several years farming has been a failure to these people. This caused them to have to get aid from the relief and in doing so the children have been lacking in food and



clothing the lack of the balance ration have caused quite a number of the children to be undernourished or underweight.

For the lack of clothing children have been caused to stay away from school which caused them to be thrown back in their class work. The school equipment is not very good. So often to carry or help to carry on school work successful different articles to aid in the instruction is purchased by the teacher.

The only recreation that the children get from this community is from the school. The school gives entertainments about twice a month and every Friday evening from three until four o'clock, will have a program or play of some type inviting the parents out. In this community they only have church twice a month and the preacher doesn't stay in this particular community, therefore, the religious instructions are few. The school try to aid along this line when having devotional exercise by letting the children quote different verses from the bible. The name of the community which I refer



to is Thompson Ville, Colorado County.

The living conditions of this community could be improved very much in Walker County, Mt. Zion community. There are mostly three and four rooms found in a home, and the occupants are from six to fourteen in family. In some of them children sleep on the floor and the older members sleep in the beds. There are few screens to the windows and doors and poor lighting facilities, their windows are made with shutters on them saying when they are shut no air comes in. Their social opportunities are very limited, the church and suppers are the main phases of entertainment but when school is going on the school provides some pleasure as though programs and entertainments supervised by the teachers. The Y.W.C.A. and Parent Teachers Association is one main outlet we find. The people go to town on Saturdays and carry the children where every they go. The child who is able to work, go to the field in the morning and in the evening there maybe a supper or entertainment given this child gets ready to go just as



the parents do. The church services are somewhat long and the child gets tired of sitting on Sundays that is the outlets they have. They visit from house to house, especially when one is ill. They feel that this is the correct thing to do, but they feel that this is friendship exhibited. So this problem has been mended by the school and through such means we as teachers are the working agents in which this problem can be straightened out. And we are working out this program we have a nice piano in the school, we have organized the P. T. A. the Y. W. C. A., we have built a Boy Scout Building and I as Home Economics teacher formed an adult class to meet twice a week. In this meeting we discussed the problems of the home, as the type of food that children should eat, the sleep and rest of the parents and children.

In thinking in terms of some of the specific problems the following may be considered. There was an instance which I remember of a little six year old girl fighting at school, the teacher at-



tempted to punish the child by whipping her. The child refused persistently to be punished by this particular teacher and really tried to give her reason which when summed up was a repetition of one of what I understand as a common occurrence. It was this, the mother of the child had talked about or rather discussed this particular teacher in the presence of the child.

The things said by the mother had been very uncomplimentary. As a matter of fact, the mother expressed some of the things to the teacher, that is, this patron considered the teacher morally unfit to punish her child. This was told to me by an observer who was left wondering what could be done in a situation of this kind.

A certain little boy was allowed to have his way a great deal at home and of course he carried his desires into the classroom. The little boy was always in a fight and when the teacher offered punishment he would run home and in a few minutes his mother or father would come back to



the school with him to demand an explanation from the teacher and giving her desires that her child is not to be punished for fighting as she wishes him to take up for himself. From one trip to another, the boy was finally expelled for such school pranks.

A father was informed by his daughter that his son's conduct in school was not just what it should have been. These parents appeared to be very intelligent and gave to their children the very best home training and every possible advantage, in return expecting the best behavior from them.

Instead of the father reprimanding the fifteen year old son at home during the noon hour, he waited until the boy returned to school, then the irate father went to the school, and beat the boy unmercifully, in an effort to impress the teacher of his strictness.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ORGANIZING PARENT GROUPS FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF TEACH- ING PARENT EDUCATION

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Clubs organized for the specific purpose of studying Parent Education. These groups are often short lived and one is likely to find it difficult to get the interest of enough parents to carry on effective work. Once organized it is difficult to keep the group interested as parents are not awake to the idea. They feel that they know enough about "bring up children". They are often loath to the term "Study" groups having been out of school over such a long period of time they are embarrassed for fear their abilities to read and express themselves will be exposed.

The initial organizations one should be aware of any attempt of formal study in the under privileged groups, a talk or a lecture will be found to be more effective in beginning situations.

It is often wise to have a social hour at the end of the discussion, as this is often the



mothers only outlet for recreation. Meetings should not be more than twice a week and better once until the second year. There should always be provision made for the mothers to bring the children along since they can be taken care of by some older sisters and brothers of the group. Fathers should be welcomed when ever they show any interest, as better family cooperations will result. It can be left to the judgment of the leader whether to have them meet in separate groups or with the mothers.

The lessons should be given in talks mostly to begin with in very simple language and very short 30 minutes of well planned material might be more effective from the start. A resourceful and open minded leader can always tell when more can be added as the group advances.

The clubs should be organized with regard to the children of the families where ever possible so all will have a common interest. It is also good to serve some form of inexpensive refreshment, if it must be donated by the group

## WHAT TO TEACH?

or furnished by the leader.

The rural life of Texas has developed largely of cattle raising, truck farming and cotton farming. It is the life in the cotton fields of Texas in which we shall be especially interested. The agricultural situation is undergoing a gradual change. The Government has set down the large production of cotton having more value than for the cotton growers. The farmer has less money with which to purchase necessities and must produce and use more of his own. This situation presents the problem also for the older boy and girl in that their fathers are earning money only in the winter months and the problem for the mother and her household must be considered. The boy and girl must be able to go out in the cotton fields and earn money to go to college. They have very little chance to do so. Therefore Parent Education in this nation should take these problems into consideration along with the ones mentioned in the above description.



## CHAPTER V.

### WHAT TO TEACH?

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The rural life of Texas has consisted largely of cattle raising, truck farming and cotton farming. It is the life in the cotton belts of Texas in which we shall be specifically interested. The agricultural situation is undergoing a gradual change. The Government has cut down the large production of cotton leaving more leisure time for the cotton growers. The farmer has less money with which to purchase commodities and must produce and can more of his spring truck garden for the winter months. This situation presents the problem also for the older boy and girl in that their chances for earning money early in adolescence has been lessened and the problem for more leisure to be planned for. The boy who used to go out in the cotton fields and earn money to go to college has very little chance to do so. Therefore Parent Education in this section should take these problems into consideration along with the ones mentioned in the above descriptions.



which were as follows:

1. Problems of family relationship. In the case of the close relatives marrying and the older children sleeping with the parents of opposite sex.
2. What to do with the additional leisure brought about by the shortage in cotton crops, result in idleness of the older children in the family.
3. Health situations, where reference was made to over crowded, conditions in houses with plank windows etc. The bad location of wells etc.
4. In the case of the indiscriminate all night suppers as their only recreation, a broader recreational program should be planned.
5. In all cases where the young child was mentioned there was evidence of a general program in training of the pre-school child.
6. There is also evidence of the need of some economical training in these situations where



- the families must meet their need on such a low budget. Practiced budgets should be worked out with them taking into consideration all the possible material that can be produced and saved by the farmer and the things that are around him.
7. There should also be included a lesson on personality development and emotion control in these stressing times.
  8. The need of teaching the parent to help direct the child in choosing a vocation that will fit into his situation in life.
  9. In all cases where there is no Demonstration Agent or Home Economics teacher the Parent Education leader should include some practical lessons in clothing and nutrition.

The outline of the course developing out of the actual need of the community whether selected by the group or advanced by the leader should meet with an attitude of readiness to learn from the group because of the existing interest, rather than

a stock outline. The important phases eliminated in such a plan can be tactfully brought in by the leader, by a visiting lecturer or by special public lectures where most of the group could be reached.

Books for writing the program of instruction are: "The Agricultural Education of the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. This material is usually published in pamphlet or bulletin form which makes it very convenient for use in study groups.

State Agricultural Colleges often furnish valuable publications available at a nominal cost, or free. There are also many other possible sources. The following suggested list will be found helpful to the reader:

1. The U. S. Bureau of Rural Education  
Rural Study Association Inc.,  
2, 3, Courthouse and Chambers, 105  
2nd West Fifth Street  
New York, N. Y.
2. The China Press and the China and Foreign  
Press, Ltd., 25, 26, 27, 28  
Chancery Lane, W. C. 2, London, W. C. 2.
3. The Eye-School China, Ellen Island, 1931,  
No. 22, Free



## CHAPTER VI.

### MATERIAL FOR STUDY

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One can secure excellent material from the State Department of Education and Government Publications free or at a very low cost. In writing for government material address requests to the Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. This material is usually published in pamphlet or bulletin form which makes it very convenient for use in study groups.

State Agricultural Colleges often furnish valuable publications available at a minimum cost, or free. There are also many other possible sources. The following suggested list will be found helpful to the leaders:

1. Why do Parents Need Special Training?  
Child Study Association Inc.,  
E. R. Groves and Others. 10¢  
221 West 57th. Street  
New York, N. Y.
2. The Child From One to Six, His Care and Training. Pub. No. 30, 1931. 10¢  
Children's Bureau, U. S. Dept. of Labor,  
Washington, D. C.
3. The Pre-School Child. Ellen Lombard, 1931,  
No. 29. Free



Office of Education, U. S. Dept. of  
Interior, Washington, D. C.

4. Adolescence. January, 1933, Issue of  
Understanding the Child. 25¢  
Mass. Society of Mental Hygiene  
3 Joy Street, Boston, Mass.
5. Growing Up in the World Today  
E. V. Clapp. 20¢  
Mass. Society for Social Hygiene  
1150 Little Bldg. Boston, Mass.
6. Suggestions for the preparation of  
Leaders for Parent Education Groups in  
Emergency Education Programs, (F.E.R.A.,  
October, 1934 E-37) Free  
Parent Education Office, Educational  
Division, Federal Emergency Relief Admin-  
istration, Washington, D. C.
7. A List of Motion Picture Films for Parent  
Education, Koon, Tilson, Gregg. (F.E.R.A.,  
June, 1934) Free  
Parent Education Office, Educational Divi-  
sion, Federal Emergency Relief Administra-  
tion, Washington, D. C.

In some states Circulating Libraries  
can be usually obtained through the State De-  
partment of Education, approximately 12 volumes  
at a time. After these have been used and re-  
turned another set can be selected.

In case this is not possible the library  
problem is left to the resourcefulness of the  
teacher. The following suggestions are offered:



- A. By giving plays or entertainments  
to raise money for the books needed.
- B. By subscriptions from the members of  
the group to make the purchase of  
necessary books and these books be-  
comes the property of the group.

In this case the leader must use discretion in  
choosing the best books to meet the general need  
of the group. Also buying from College Second-  
hand Stores often helps in meeting this situation.

## CHAPTER VII.

### TYPES OF LEADERS

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The Trained Leader: There should be at least one trained leader in Texas to whom other workers, who aspire to start parent study groups, might go for special training. Because of the vast territory of the State, this leader possibly could be of more service to more people if institutes were held in different sections of the State for a limited period of time, for the benefit of those teachers interested in their respective section. In summer this leader might return to the State School. There should also be time provided in this itinerary for instructing the regular session college students who are enrolled in the Child-Care Classes.

A college student might be an "A" student in Child guidance yet meet with very little success in dealing with parents, and especially is this true of the rural parents of which this study is made, as they have not been previously



prepared in any way to receive these new ideas. They are not readers of current literature, they have no radios, nor do lecturers frequent these types of communities. The parent hears this new Education, the first time at the first meeting.

It should be compulsory for every teacher in these remote communities to take a six weeks course for the teaching group.

The average college student does not have the ability to distinguish between what part of their newly gained knowledge to teach the parent, and what not to attempt. And teachers on the job should be given the advantage of some scientific knowledge in group education leadership, for there are often cases where the teacher attempts to teach sex education with a beautiful story of life and adding to it the detail physiological background in cases of the very young child.

A trained leader should possess the following personal characteristics:



1. Natural tendency to leadership.
2. Openmindedness to all situations.
3. A willingness to be differed with by the parents.
4. An even temper or emotional balance, pleasant and friendly.
5. Patient sympathetic attitude toward the individuals of the group and their problems.
6. A willingness to make personal sacrifices for professional growth.
7. The ability to get and keep the confidence of the parents.
8. Some religious faith should be evident for successful leadership among people of rural life.
9. The ability to give the parents security rather than insecurity in their home life and disciplinary problems with their children.
10. Cheerfulness on the part of the leader will help greatly to solve the problem of cooperation.

In addition to the above stated personal attitude a specialist will find it very beneficial



to have a good educational background in Psychology, Home Economics and Physical Education.

The Lay Leader is usually a member selected from the group who shows evidence of good leadership. This leader should present all outlines in detail to the trained leader before attempting to conduct a group.

Both types of leaders should take advantage of assistance from the group, assigning such duties as serving, exhibits etc. Often the Home Economics teacher, and older students in the school will be of assistance in caring for the children during the meeting.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### METHODS OF TEACHING

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The lecture method is very good for beginning classes, in the initial work when parents have not had the advantage of any previous information. Lectures should not be more than 35- to 40 minutes long. The formal lecture is about the best method of approach in groups of over 40. In large gatherings a subject should be chosen which will be of interest to all parents such as, "Growth Stages" as the leader will not appear before that particular group again.

The Question-Lecture Method is a good form to use in weaning the group from the formal lecture, time is allowed for questions at the end of the lecture. The leader be careful never to enter hostile arguments. Give the parent the privilege to disagree, draw the answer from other members of the group whenever possible, but do not allow the meeting to lag or stay over time, leave the questions for the next meeting or discuss with the individual most interested. The informal talk within the group often stimulates questions.



The informal talk is very effective in small groups. The use of slips passed out to the group with blanks to be filled, often add interest. The leader must be sure each member of the group can write. Example: Children, \_\_\_\_\_ born with fears. All two year olds require \_\_\_\_\_ amount of sleep. These slips can be mimeographed with an introduction to the lesson and returned to the members at the end of this group of lessons to compile and keep.

After the class has been taught for some time by any of the previously stated methods and has gained a fair insight to the course, lessons can be taught by the experience of others bearing relation to the class discussion. This being drawn out by the leaders introductive talk.

The use of short stories to introduce lessons on truth, honesty, and the forming of good habits is often a very good method of approach around which the entire lesson can be woven.

Exhibits are often very helpful in rural communities as the parent is familiar with this

sort of teaching if they are truly educational at the end of a course, exhibits of papers that have been prepared, pictures of play material, childrens play suits, correct foot-ware, types of deseases for in children, the undernourished and the nurished type.

A teacher brought a number of poor types of toys and placed them on the table, on another table she placed examples of good types and the lesson was taught by the class taking a tour around the tables discussing the toys.

Demonstrations of how to prepare children's food, and various others can be undertaken by a leader with a home economics back-ground or one who is willing to be prepared by previous experimentations before attempting to demonstrate it to the group. Other specialists, can be called into the group, even the local physician will often cooperate in this way.

Radio, often many rural people have not even heard a radio. Whenever possible have them listen in on a radio program on some phase of



child guidance it will have a magnetic effect upon these groups as in no other manner. They will become awakened to the fact that it is a world's Program.

The discussion method is one of the most popular methods used at the present time. It is a method in which each member of the class plays a part. It is used after the group has some background or is able to read along with the leader before coming to the study group. The leader should withhold her information and draw out the group. A leader cannot get discussion by answering the questions herself, but they should be referred always to the group until the group is exhausted. If the correct thought is then not reached the leader gives an illustration to clear up the minds from the incorrect answers. Discussion can be provoked by : direct questions, problems, or in any way the leader is clever enough to use. One should guard against the following evils:

## CHAPTER II.

### TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ORGANIZED CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOLS

1. Permitting any one member to monopolize too much of the time.
2. Permitting the discussion to drag.
3. Permitting too much time for argument.
4. Drifting from the point.
5. Leaving much of the outline uncovered.

The question arises, shall this great work be wholly neglected, or shall we attempt to reach the children in the moral training of the young? Shall we neglect the spiritual training of the young which was usually the church, the home, and occasionally the social training of the young? Shall we neglect this responsibility upon the local teachers, who should immediately begin the program through these organizations? It is a simple, practical way, attempting to reach only those that are not reached and are not interested in the church and home. This has been tried in many places and has been successful. A few parents will be reached and encouraged to send their children to Sunday school. The great work of the church and home can be



## CHAPTER IX.

### TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ORGANIZED COMMUNITY GROUPS

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Because of the present economic conditions a specific course in Parent Education will probably be delayed for several years by Educators and philanthropists who might help. The question arises; shall this great need be wholly neglected, or shall we attempt to meet the situation in the rural communities offering all the assistance through the organized groups which are usually the church, the lodge, and occasionally the parent teacher association. At the present time this responsibility faces the local teacher, who should immediately begin the program through these organization in a simple, practical way, attempting to teach only lessons that she can read understand and familiarize herself with or reading good newspaper articles to the group or having them read without discussion. A few parents will be reached and encouraged to read farther for themselves. Such articles from current literature can be

read by an older student in Friday after-noon school programs which are so popular in rural schools.

We give the Parent Education Course in the following manner: Lectures given by trained teachers in public gatherings before the course begins.

Being supported by visiting teachers, Home Demonstration Agents and Rural Agents who are always acquainted with the group, when making local leaders to make announcements, they should be given in advance in written form so that a thorough understanding may be obtained. Better results can be expected if the leader makes the announcement offering any necessary explanation and possible relating on newspaper news. Active interest and enthusiasm report of activities of the group frequently sent to settlement schools. This should be done at once. Settlement schools are also to be held in public groups, given to the local school



## CHAPTER X.

### PUBLICITY

Publicity in the rural community can be given the Parent Education Course in the following manner: Lectures given by trained leaders in public gatherings before the course begins.

Being stressed by visiting lecturers, Home Demonstration Agents and Farm Agents who are always acquainted with the group, when asking local leaders to make announcements, they should be given in advance in written form so that a thorough understanding may be obtained. Better results can be expected if the leader makes the announcement offering any necessary explanation and possible relating an illustrative behavior problem. Send newspaper report of activities of the group frequently forming capable communities to take this responsibility. Circulars can often be passed out in public groups, given to the local stores

to be wrapped with their merchandise, and sent to the public school. Since these families live so far apart. Such methods of publicity are the most satisfactory.

who are interested in this special field to get first hand scientific knowledge in connection Parent Education classes. The night also hold Extension Schools of Instruction for the benefit of those who are already teaching and wish to start a program.

There is also continuing evidence of the necessity of compulsory Parent Education among the colored groups in the rural communities until sufficient interest is aroused.

Because of the present economic conditions there may be several years before sufficient funds shall be appropriated for this special phase of education yet it should not be delayed, at the present time it appears to be the job of the local teacher to begin this work in the rural communities through the local organizations. The church, the Parent Teacher Association and lodge.



## S U M M A R Y

It is essential that a well trained Parent Education Leader be employed in the state for the purpose of training group leadership, making it possible for the College Students who are interested in this special field to get first hand scientific knowledge in conducting Parent Education classes. She might also hold Extension Schools of Instruction for the benefit of those who are already teaching and wish to start a program.

There is also convincing evidence of the necessity of compulsory Parent Education among the colored groups in the rural communities until sufficient interest is aroused.

Because of the present Economic conditions there may be several years before sufficient funds shall be appropriated for this special phase of Education yet it should not be delayed, at the present time it appears to be the job of the local teacher to begin this work in the rural communities through the local organizations. The church, the Parent Teacher Association and Lodge.

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